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## **ADEQ Plans Water Quality Testing Event for Gila Valley Students at Discovery Park as part of Earth Month Activities**

PHOENIX (April 11, 2011) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced today that the agency will sponsor a water quality testing event at Eastern Arizona College’s Discovery Park Campus in Safford for 130 Safford and Pima fifth-grade students from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Thursday, April 21 as part of ADEQ’s statewide activities conducted during Earth Month.

The students, from Dorothy Stinson Elementary School in Safford and Pima Elementary School, will be divided into groups and given kits to test for pH balance, temperature, dissolved oxygen and turbidity in the water.

The event also is being conducted during activities throughout April surrounding Earth Day on April 22. ADEQ staff will be participating in 16 events around the state.

“Water monitoring events like this in the Gila River Valley area and throughout the state increase environmental awareness and help students of all ages protect public health year-round,” ADEQ Director Henry Darwin said.

“EAC Discovery Park Campus is proud to host ADEQ in celebrating Earth Day and the importance of protecting and conserving our natural resources,” said Paul R. Anger, director of EAC Discovery Park Campus. “We are excited to join with our educational outreach partners and share a variety of fun hands-on activities like water quality testing, protecting endangered species, recycling, discovering microscopic pond life, and understanding environmental concerns. Most importantly, we are looking forward to promoting an interest in the sciences with our greatest natural resource, our youth.”

ADEQ has spearheaded numerous initiatives to protect children’s health including a school bus idling reduction program which now has more than 700 schools in the state participating. The agency also has a school flag program that communicates daily air quality conditions at school districts in Maricopa and Pinal counties as well as a daily wind forecast for Yuma County.

Also, underground storage tanks at numerous school sites around the state have been evaluated and leaks cleaned up and assistance has been rendered to assist schools in controlling pests and using responsible pesticide applications.

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